

STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 135

22p



DEEP IN ALIEN SPACE,
EARTH FLEET CARRIER
ARGO ENCOUNTERS AN
ENEMY THAT WAS ONCE
A FRIEND . . .

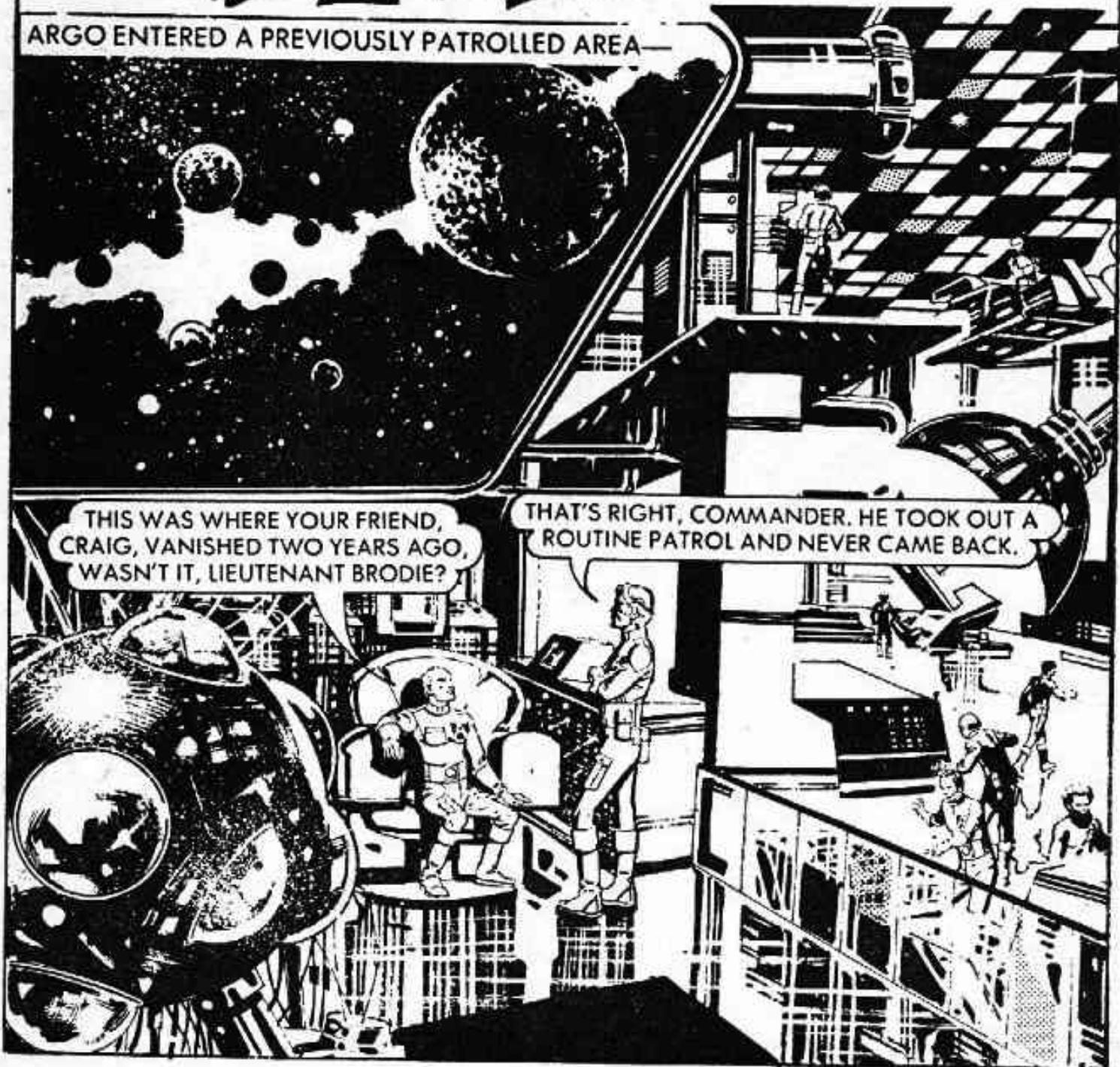
THE LOST PATROL

STARBLAZER

OUT IN DEEP SPACE DRIFTED THE GIANT EARTH FEDERATION CARRIER, ARGO. HOME TO MANY MEN, IT PATROLLED THE HOSTILE RIM OF THE GALAXY. SKIRMISHES WITH ALIENS AND RENEGADES WERE NOT UNCOMMON. NOW AND AGAIN AN ENTIRE PATROL WENT MISSING, BUT ARGO CONTINUED ON HER RELENTLESS COURSE. MORE PILOTS WERE FLOWN OUT FROM EARTH CENTRAL, AND THE CRAFT REPLACED BY ARGO'S OWN FACTORIES. SOON THESE INCIDENTS BECAME STATISTICS, LOGGED AND ALL BUT FORGOTTEN.

THE LOST PATROL

ARGO ENTERED A PREVIOUSLY PATROLLED AREA—



SUDDENLY AN ALARM SOUNDED—

COMMANDER SINCLAIR HERE—
FIGHTERS SCRAMBLE.



ARGO BECAME A HIVE OF ACTIVITY—

UNIDENTIFIED CRAFT, SIR! HOMING
IN ON US FAST! TRANSMIT IDENTITY
CHALLENGE.

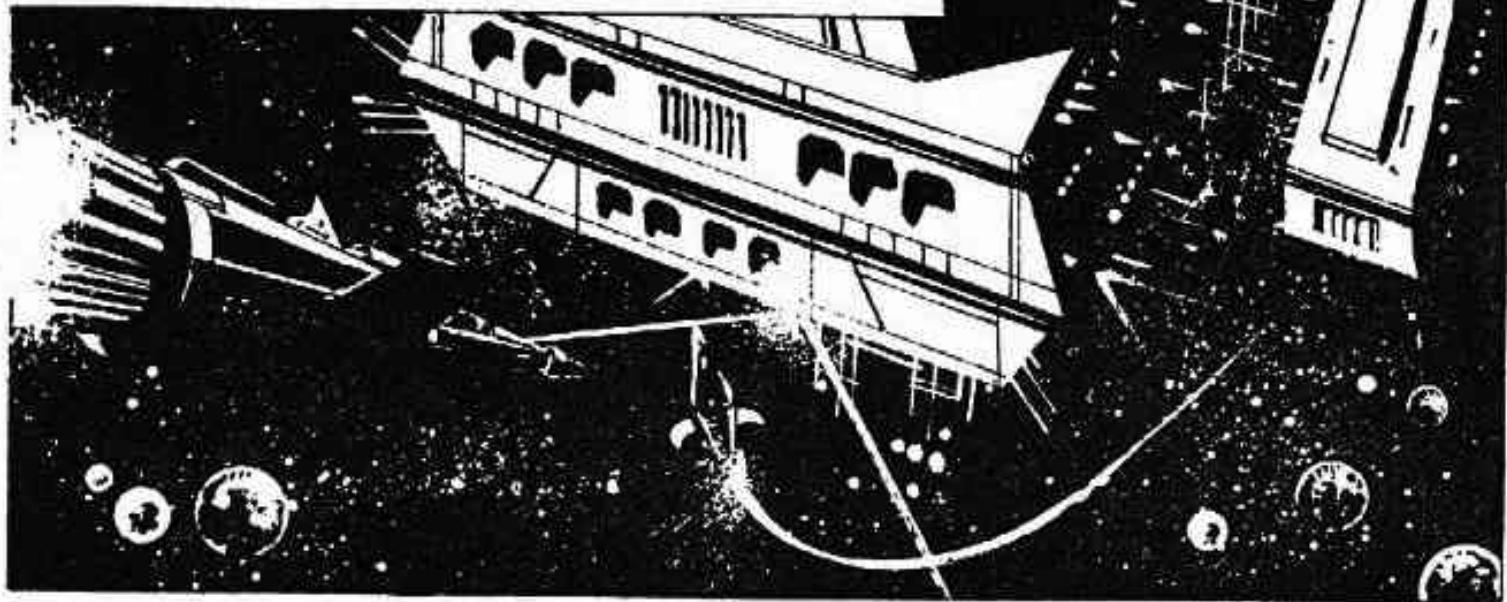




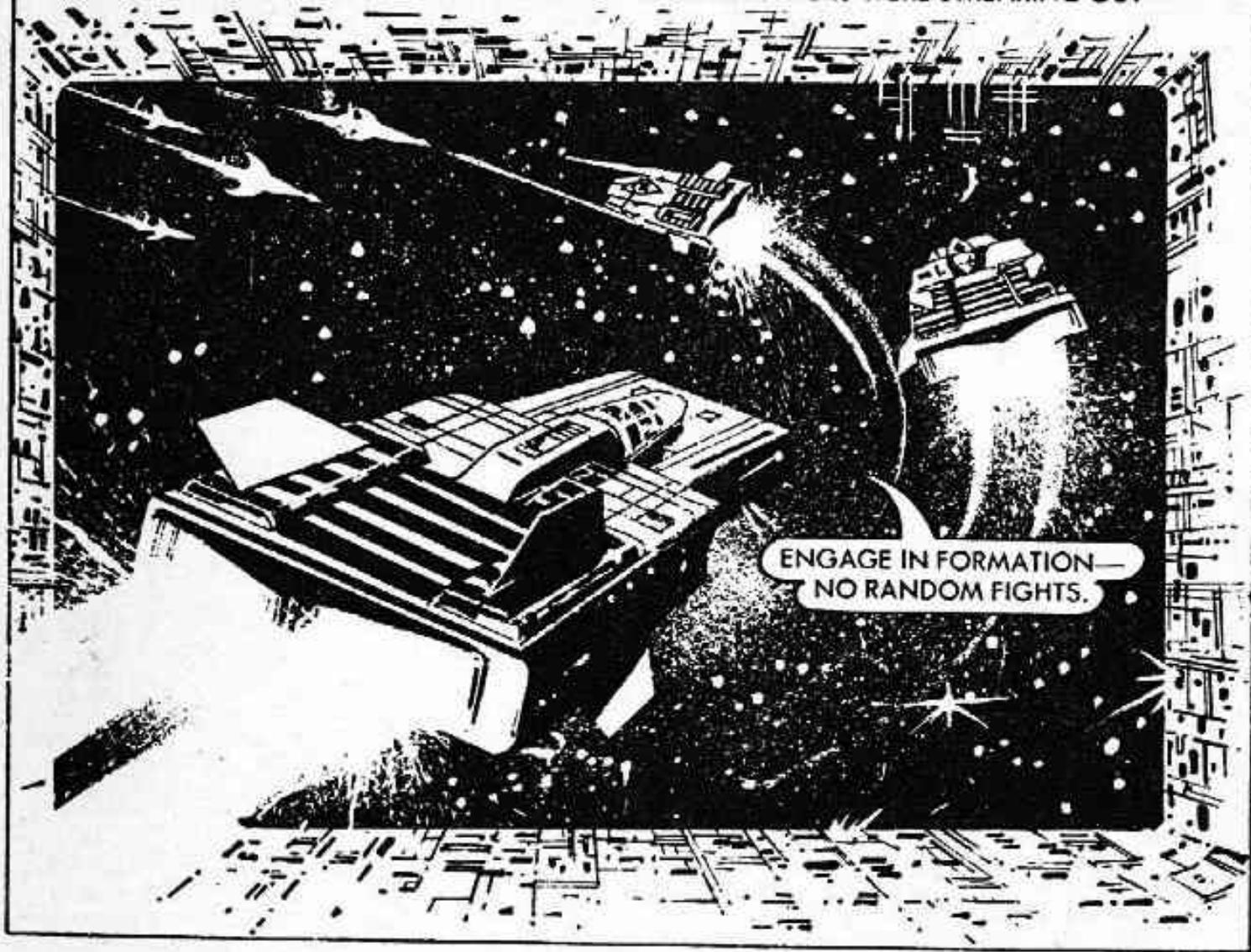
BUT THE CRAFT DID NOT RETREAT, AND ARGO CAME UNDER HEAVY ATTACK—



SAFE UNDER A DEFENCE SCREEN ARGO WAS IN NO DANGER—



MOMENTS LATER CAPTAIN SCOTT BRODIE AND HIS STARFIGHTERS WERE STREAKING OUT—



A RETROFLIP WAS A TACTIC USED TO CONFUSE AUTOSIGHTING. BY ENGAGING RETROS TO SLOW THE CRAFT, AND FLIPPING THE CRAFT ON ITS SIDE, THE Phaser BEAMS OVERSHOT.

WE'RE IN BIG TROUBLE!

SCOTT'S SQUADRON WAS OUTWITTED AT EVERY TURN. EACH MOVE THEY MADE SEEMED TO BE ANTICIPATED.



BRODIE TO ARGO! I'M GOING AFTER
THEIR LEADER! IF I CAN GET HIM, IT
MIGHT UNSETTLE THEM!





BRODIE SWUNG ONTO THE
LEADER'S TAIL...



BUT EVEN AS HE BEGAN TO
PRESS THE FIRING BUTTON—



JUPE...CAUGHT
BY A LOOP!

BUT WITH BRODIE AT HIS MERCY, THE PILOT DIDN'T FIRE.



STONE ME! HE
DIDN'T FIRE.

SCOTT SLOWED TO COME ALONGSIDE THE ALIEN—



NEXT SECOND—







BRODIE'S FLIGHT SCREAMED AWAY—



WE'RE ABOUT TO GO OUT OF
CONTACT, ARGO! NO SIGN OF HOSTILES.

BUT THE MOMENT THE INTENSE TURBULENCE
OF THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE BLANKED OUT
MICROWAVE SCANNING—



ENGAGING...NOW!



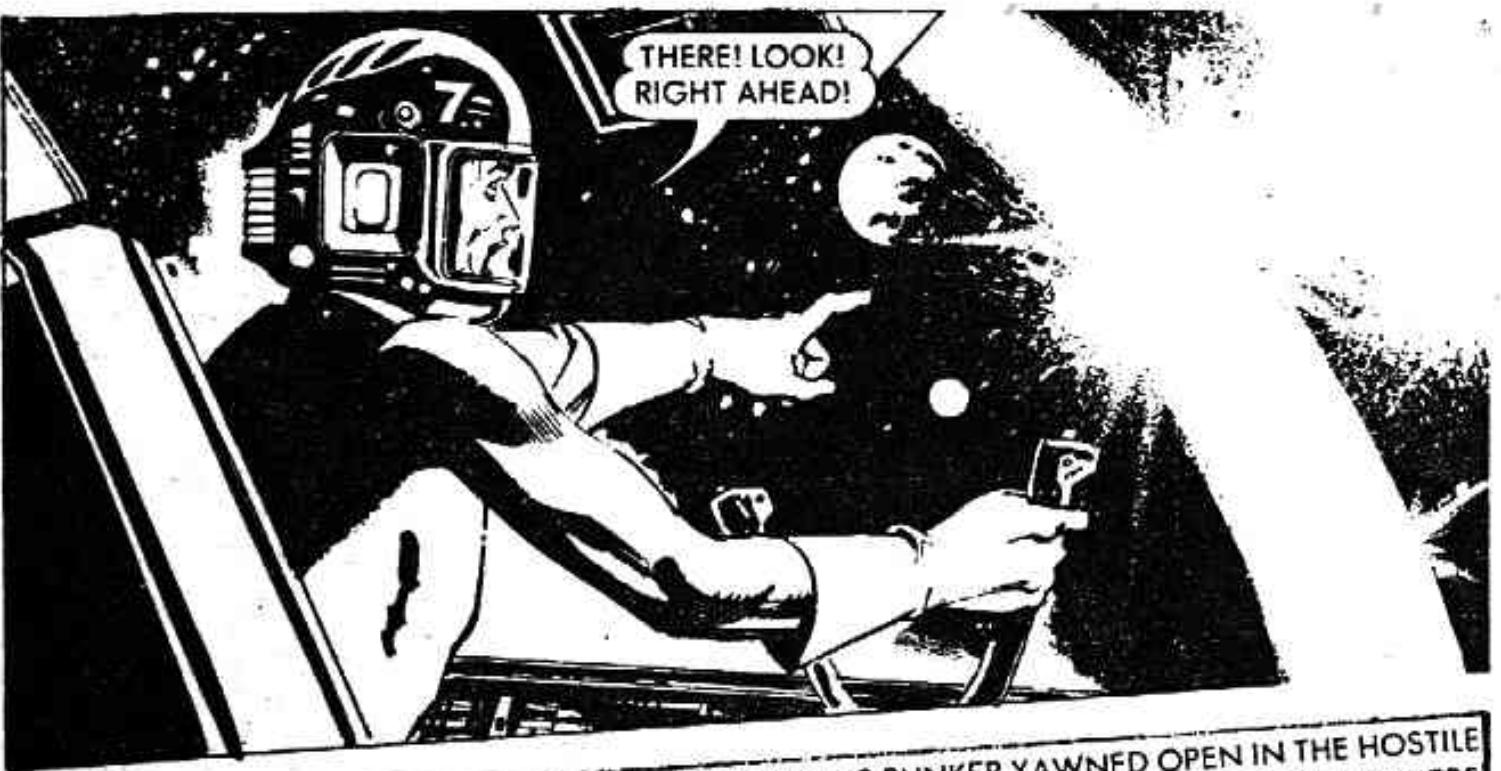
WITH SUCH A VAST DEPTH OF FIREPOWER,
THE HOSTILES WERE FORCED TO BREAK
FORMATION.



WHY DIDN'T HE EJECT? HEAD FOR
THE SURFACE! CHASE 'EM DOWN!

I'VE SEEN FRIENDLIER-LOOKING
PLACES. WHERE ARE THEY GONNA LAND?





THERE! LOOK!
RIGHT AHEAD!

AN ENORMOUS BUNKER YAWNED OPEN IN THE HOSTILE
PLANET SURFACE—AND THE RAIDERS
DISAPPEARED INSIDE.

 NOW WHAT, SKIPPER?

BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD! FIND OUT WHY THIS
PLANET IS A FIGHTER BASE, AND WHY THEIR PILOTS
DON'T EJECT FROM CRIPPLED CRAFT, AND WHO THEY
ARE FIGHTING FOR.

AS THE SQUADRON HEADED BACK TO THE COMMAND SHIP, SCOTT MADE A DETOUR TO THE PLANET'S SURFACE TO PICK UP THE CRASHED CRAFT.

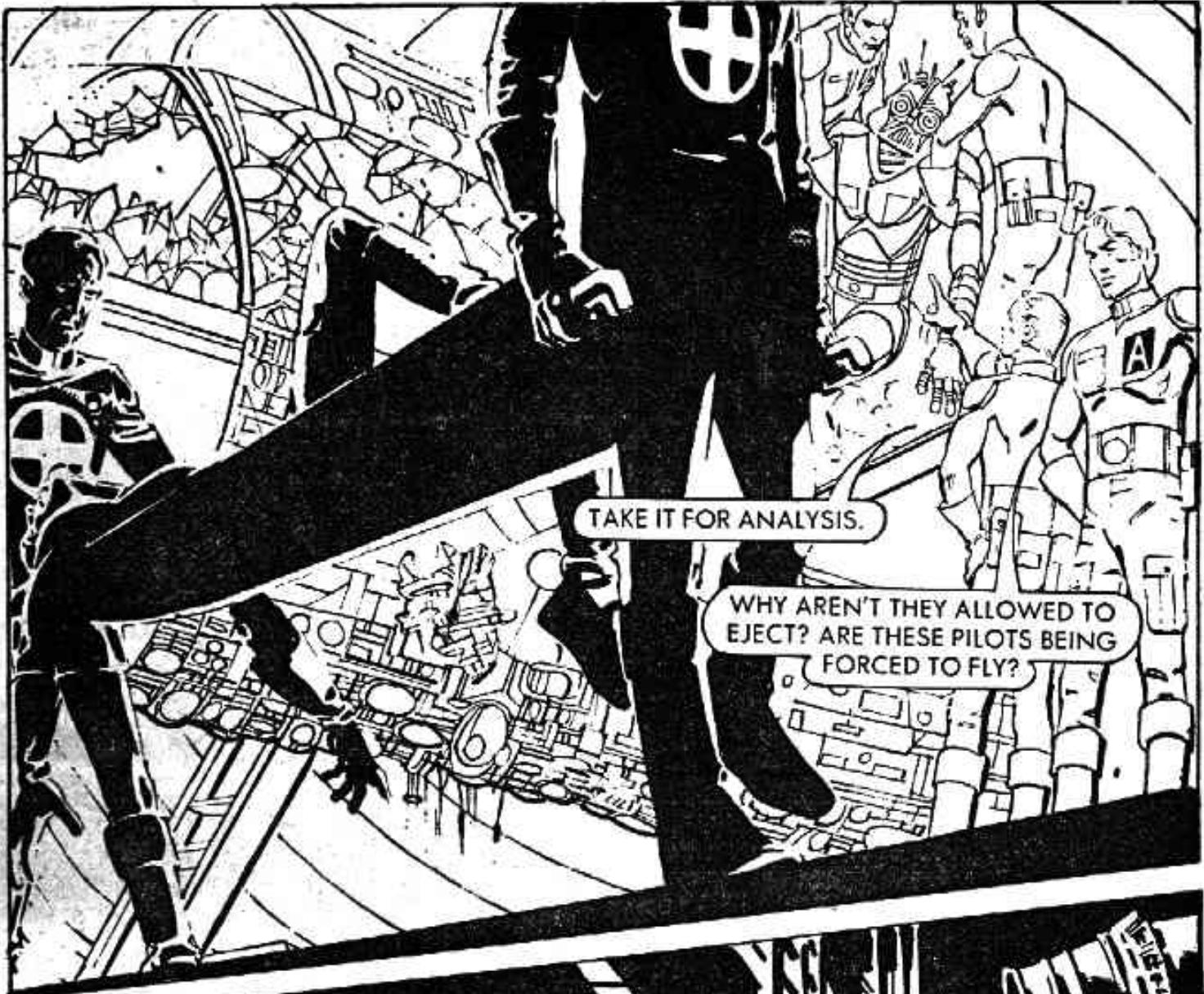


ONCE BACK IN ARGO'S MAINTENANCE BAY—

HE'S DEAD! BUT LOOK AT HIS FEET!
THEY'RE SHACKLED TO THE FLOOR!

THERE'S A SHATTERED
ROBOT HERE!





TAKE IT FOR ANALYSIS.

WHY AREN'T THEY ALLOWED TO
EJECT? ARE THESE PILOTS BEING
FORCED TO FLY?



OBVIOUSLY! BUT WHY,
AND BY WHOM?

LET ME GO BACK AND LAND NEAR THAT BUNKER,
SIR! LET ME TRY TO FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.







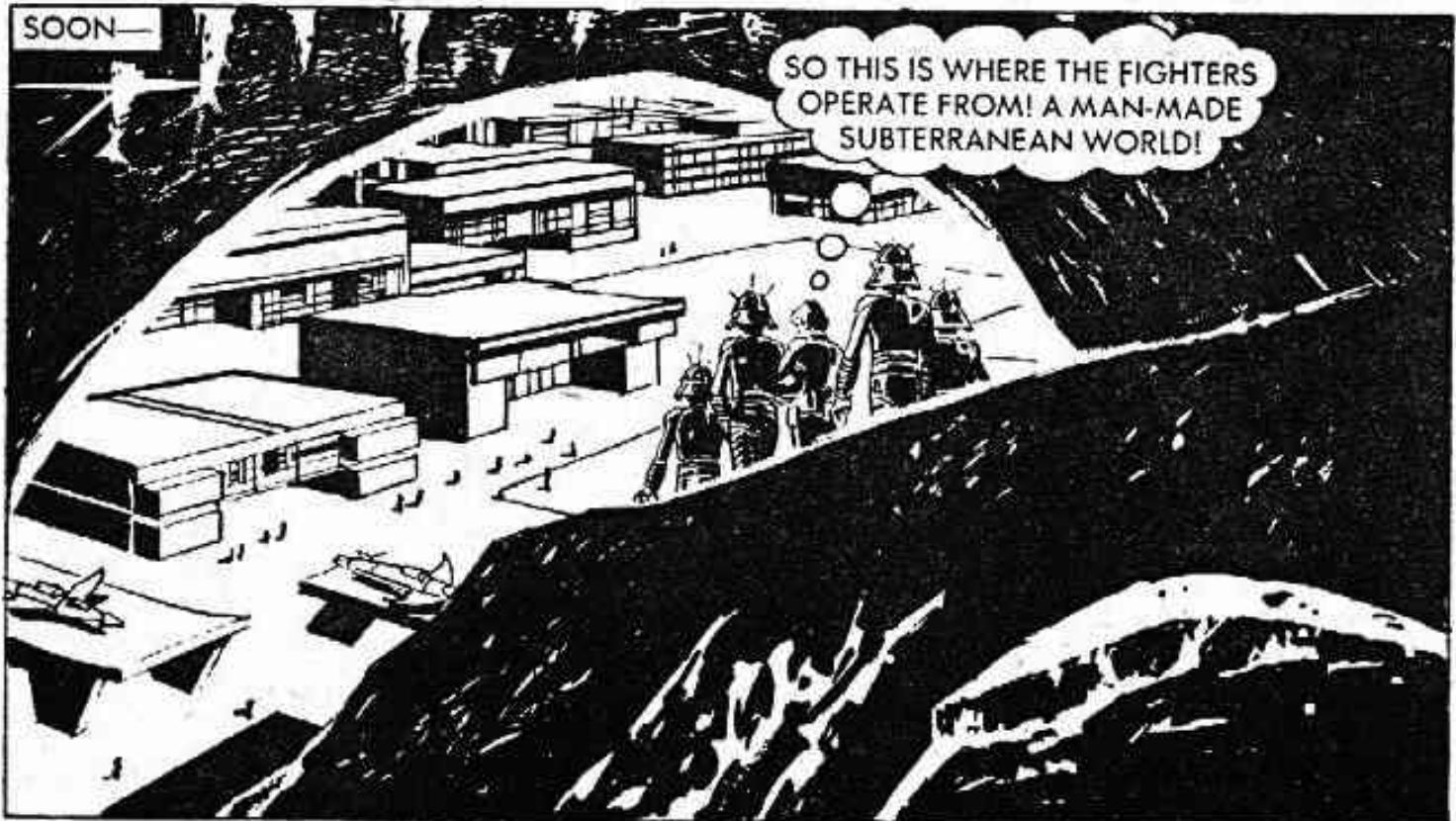
JUST AS THE ODDS SEEMED OVERWHELMING —



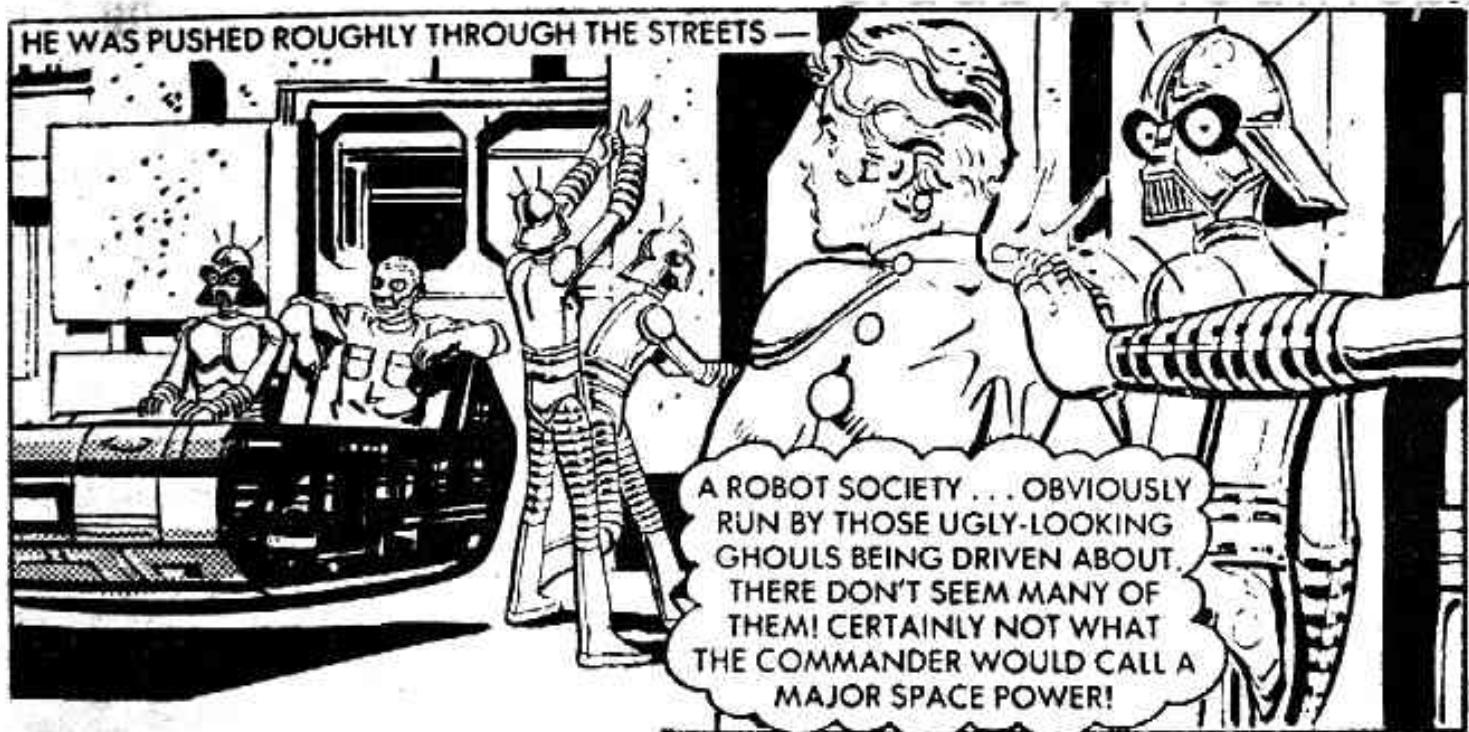
OH, GREAT! JUST
WHAT I NEEDED!



DISTRACTED BY THE CARNIVOROUS CREATURES, SCOTT HAD FAILED TO SEE ANOTHER MENACE.



HE WAS PUSHED ROUGHLY THROUGH THE STREETS —

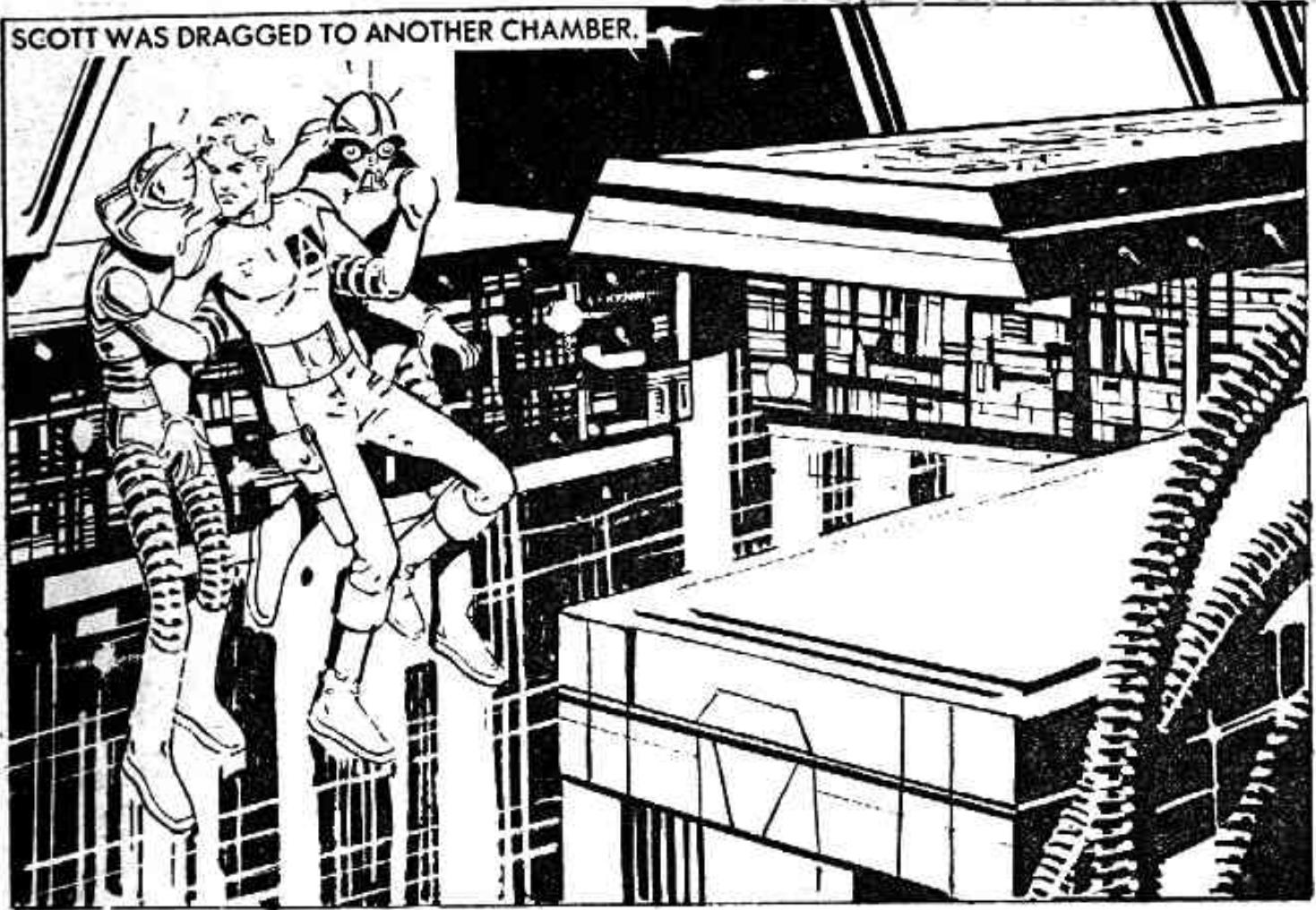


EVENTUALLY THE GROUP ARRIVED IN THE MAIN HALL —





SCOTT WAS DRAGGED TO ANOTHER CHAMBER.



HE WAS STRAPPED TO A STRANGE DEVICE —



MUCH LATER AS THE MISTS OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS RECEDED —





APPARENTLY, YEARS AGO, A SPACECRAFT FROM THE PLANET KLS LANDED SPERIS AND SEVERAL HUNDRED OTHERS HERE —

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COURT'S SENTENCE, YOU ARE TO BE ABANDONED HERE ON THE PLANET EBRO.

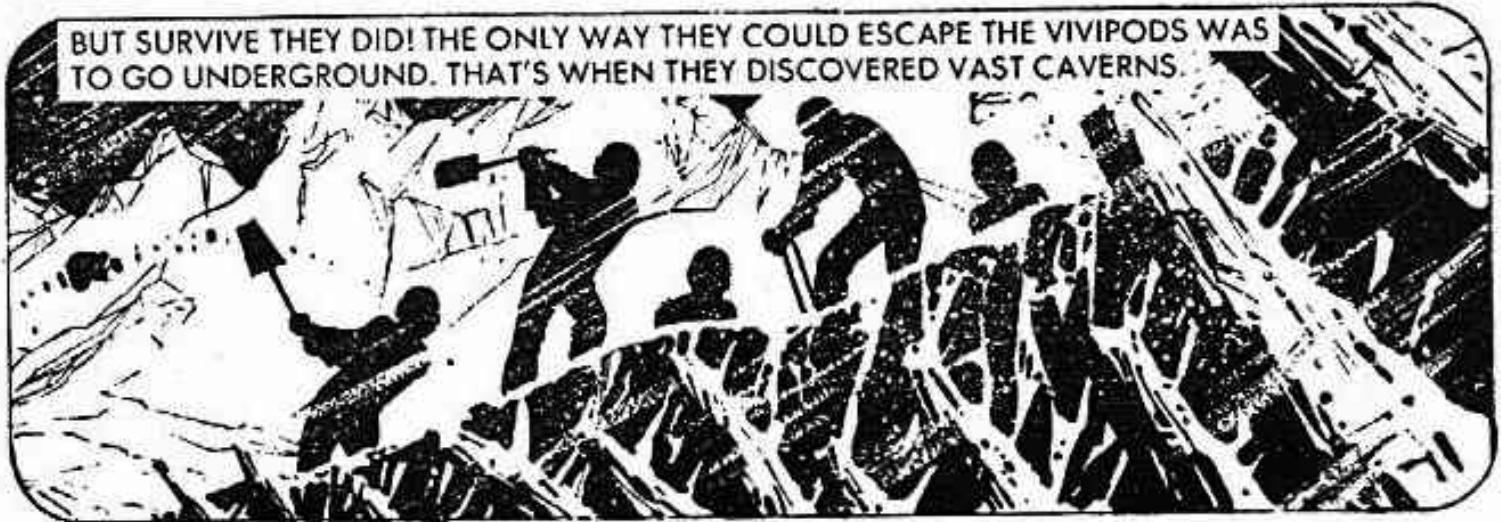


POLITICIANS, GENERALS, SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS, THEY HAD BEEN FOUND GUILTY OF A PLOT TO OVERTHROW THEIR HOME PLANET'S GOVERNMENT ...

THEY WEREN'T EXPECTED TO SURVIVE LONG, IN VIEW OF THE INHOSPITABLE CLIMATE AND THE VIVIPODS, THE FLESH-EATING CREATURES —



BUT SURVIVE THEY DID! THE ONLY WAY THEY COULD ESCAPE THE VIVIPODS WAS TO GO UNDERGROUND. THAT'S WHEN THEY DISCOVERED VAST CAVERNS.





JUPITER'S MOONS! LOOK AT THAT
ZANTHIUM — WATER, AND EDIBLE
FUNGUS. WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN
EVERYTHING WE NEED TO SURVIVE
AND FLOURISH.

IT TOOK MANY YEARS, BUT SPERIS AND HIS FOLLOWERS CREATED AN ADVANCED TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY.



IN DUE COURSE, THEIR SOCIETY REACHED ITS PEAK. THE ONLY WAY IT COULD ADVANCE FURTHER WAS TO ACHIEVE SPACE TRAVEL. THIS THEY COULDN'T DO BECAUSE THE MATERIALS DIDN'T EXIST, SO, THE OBVIOUS ANSWER WAS TO ACQUIRE IT!



WE PICKED UP A RADIO PROBE WHILE WE WERE OUT ON PATROL... AND WENT TO INVESTIGATE.

OKAY, BOYS! WE'LL GO DOWN AND SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING?

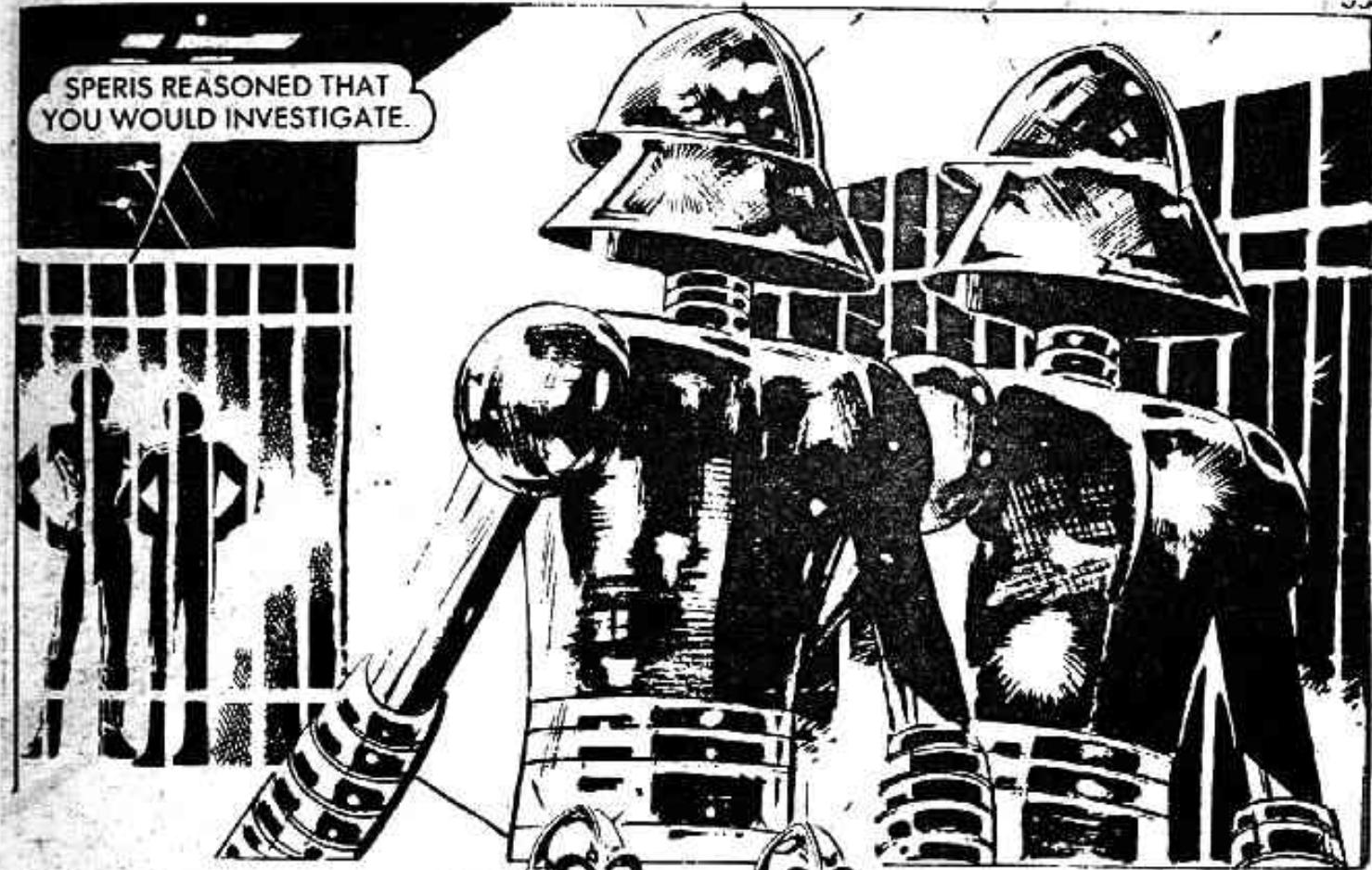




WE'VE BEEN KEPT IN COMBAT READINESS FOR TWO YEARS, JUST WAITING FOR A STARSHIP TO STRAY NEAR.



SPERIS REASONED THAT
YOU WOULD INVESTIGATE.



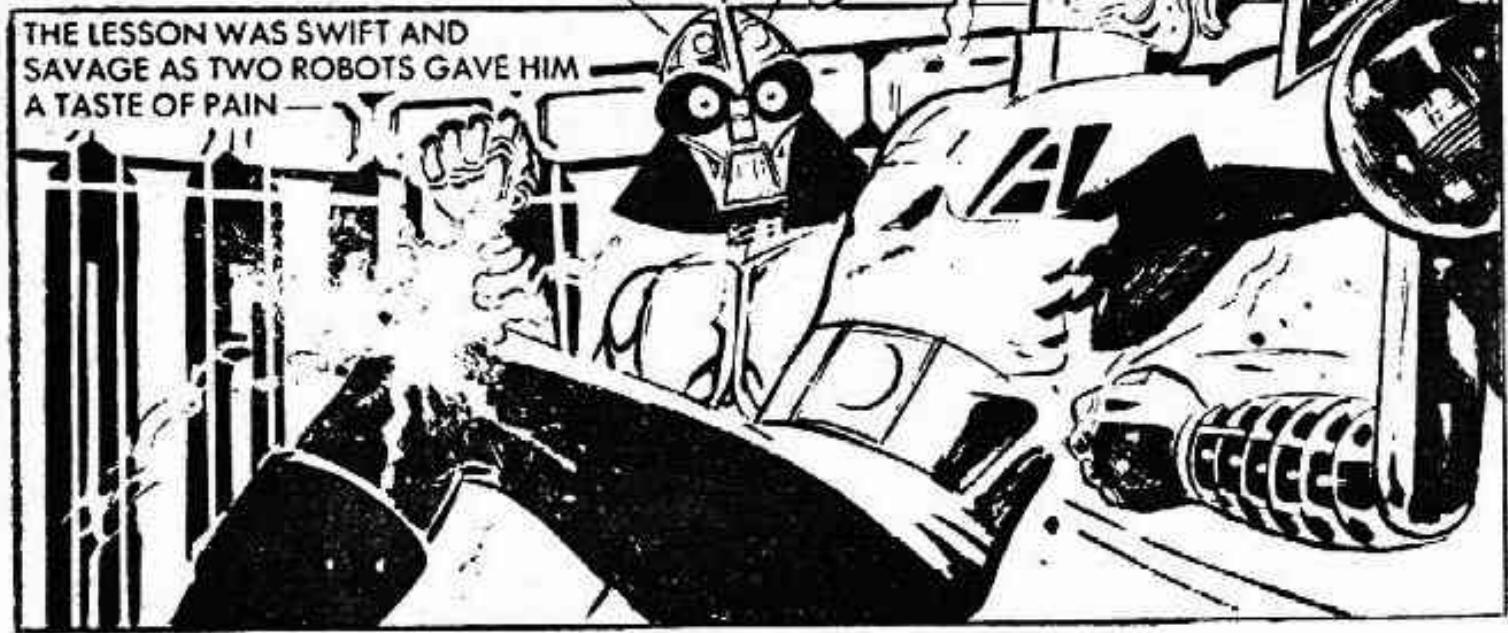
SCOTT AND DICK WERE
ORDERED TO BE PRESENT
AT THE INTERROGATION

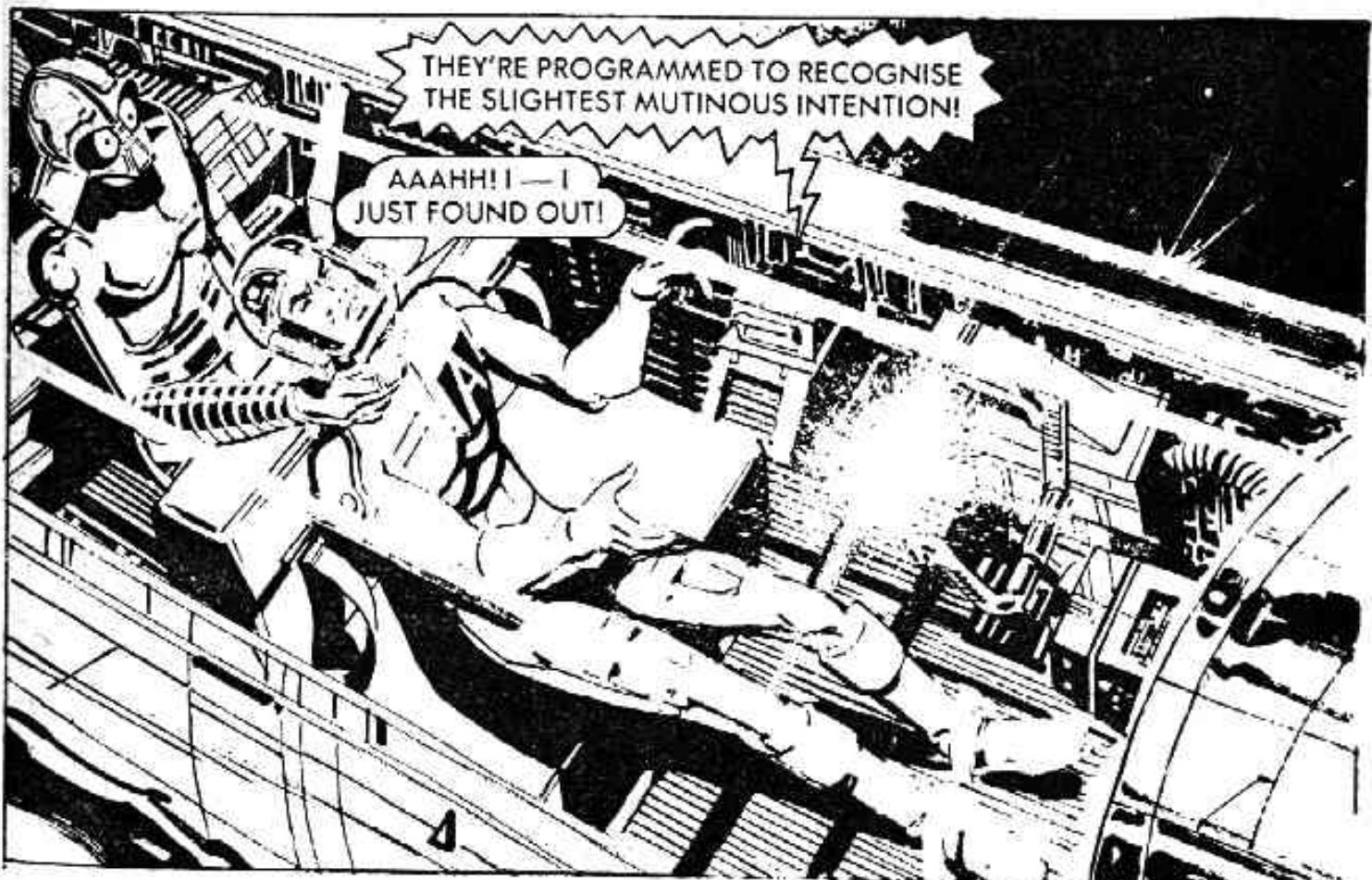
YOU ARE TO RETURN TO YOUR
COMMAND-SHIP AND LURE IT HERE!

IT'S GONE! I WAS GIVEN ONLY TWENTY-
FOUR HOURS FOR MY MISSION! AFTER
THAT, THE ARGO LEFT!



THE LESSON WAS SWIFT AND
SAVAGE AS TWO ROBOTS GAVE HIM —
A TASTE OF PAIN —

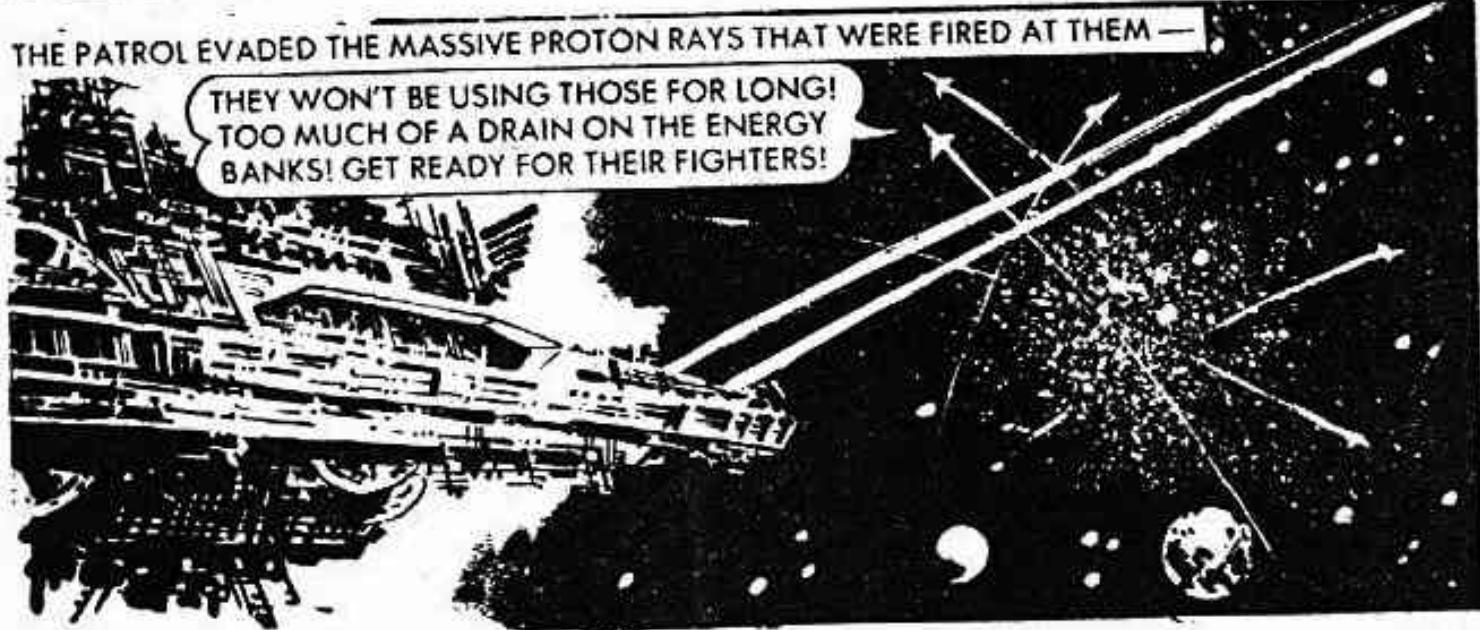




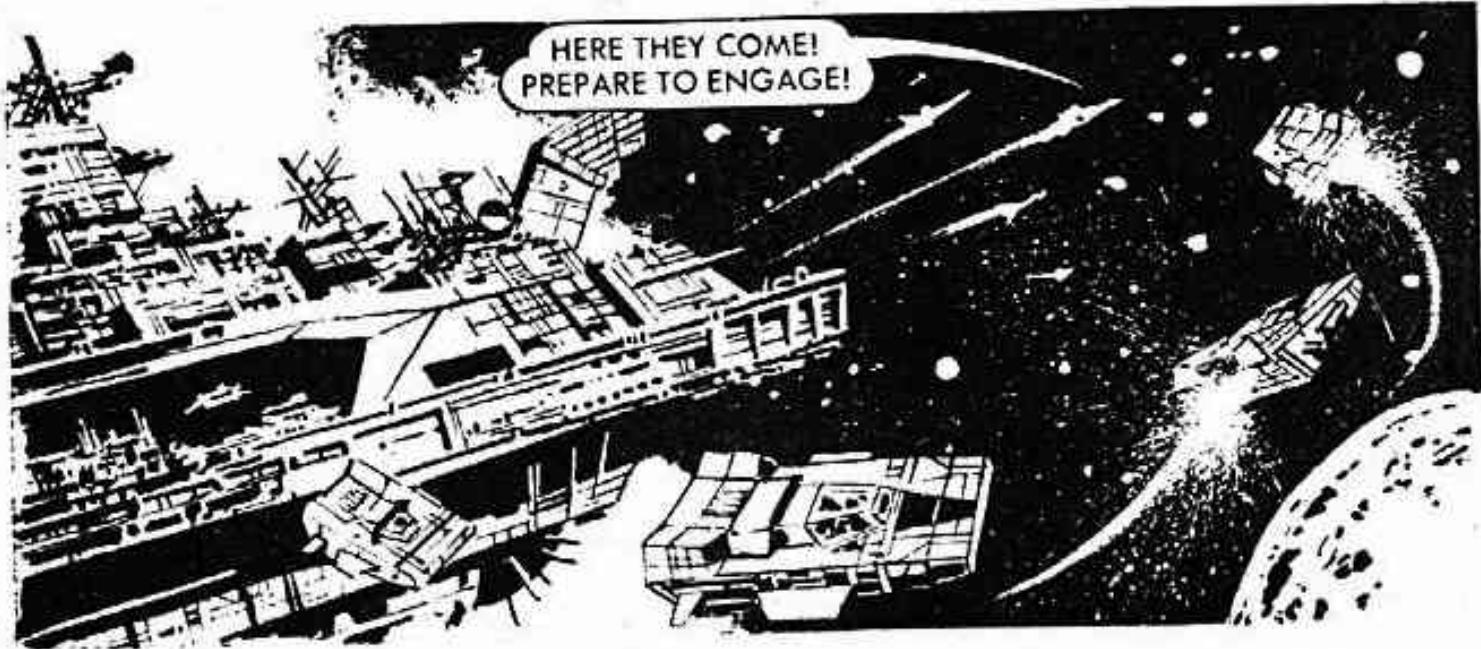
MANY UNITS LATER, AFTER NUMEROUS FRUITLESS PATROLS —



THE PATROL EVADED THE MASSIVE PROTON RAYS THAT WERE FIRED AT THEM —



HERE THEY COME!
PREPARE TO ENGAGE!



AS THE FIGHTERS SURGED FORWARD —



MOMENTS LATER —



POWERFUL BEAMS SEARED THROUGH
COCKPIT CANOPIES —





IT'S ANNIHILATION! AND THERE'S ONE HEADING FOR THE STARSHIP ITSELF! WHAT'S IT GOING TO DO?



IT'S CRAWLING INSIDE ONE OF THE MAIN DRIVES!



IT'S DETONATED AND DISABLED THE SHIP.

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SOON AFTERWARDS, THE STARSHIP COMMANDER SIGNALLED HIS WISH TO SURRENDER . . . AND RECEIVED ORDERS TO DESCEND SLOWLY TO THE PLANET'S SURFACE.



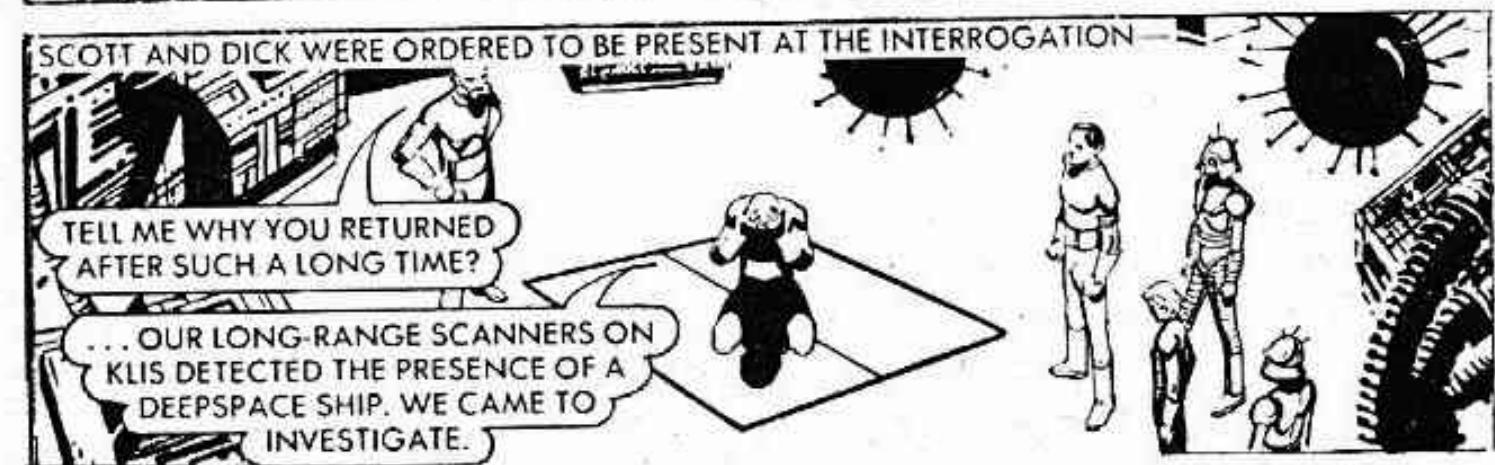
THE CRAFT WAS FROM THE HOME PLANET OF SPERIS —



THE STARSHIP COMMANDER STARED AT HIM WITH CONTEMPT —

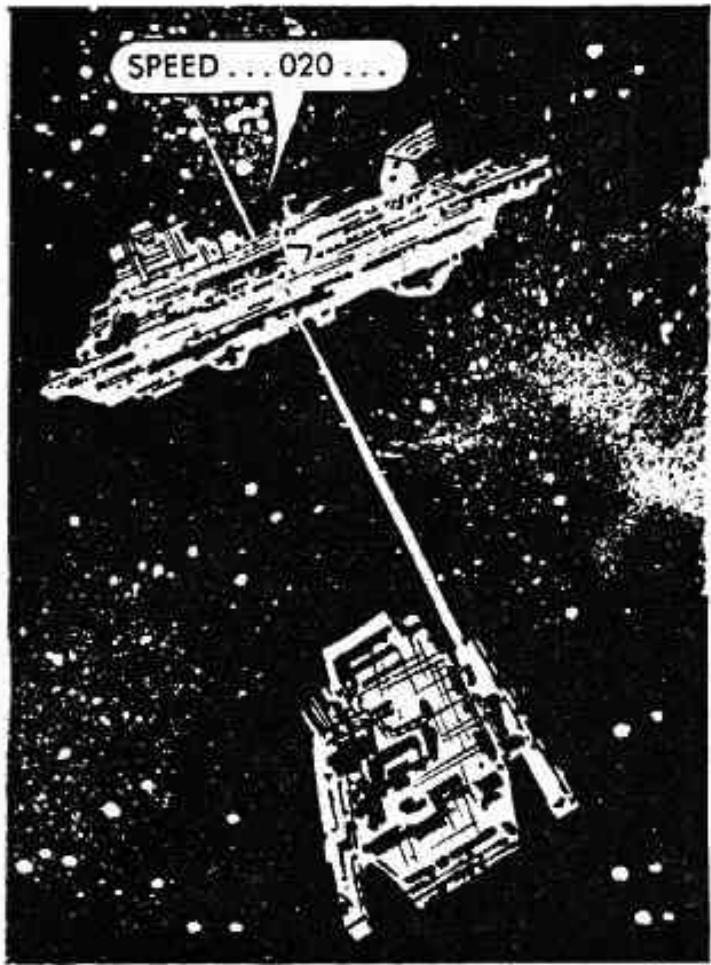


SCOTT AND DICK WERE ORDERED TO BE PRESENT AT THE INTERROGATION —









SPERIS ORDERED HIS FIGHTERS INTO THE ATTACK —



BUT —

FULL SPEED REVERSE!

WHY DOESN'T HE STAY
AND FIGHT?

WHY SHOULD HE? ALL HE HAS TO
DO IS RETREAT FAR ENOUGH TO
LEAVE YOUR FIGHTERS STRANDED
WHEN THEIR FUEL RUNS OUT! AND
YOU SEEM UNABLE TO HIT HIS
CRAFT.

IN FRUSTRATION, SPERIS ORDERED THE RECALL —

SO IT IS STALEMATE? BUT NEVER FEAR! MY HAND IS NOT PLAYED YET. YOU WILL APPROACH THE SHIP AND PARLEY WITH YOUR COMMANDER.

ABOUT WHAT? HE'D NEVER SURRENDER.

DO EXACTLY AS YOU ARE TOLD. DO NOT QUESTION MY DECISIONS. NOW GO! TAKE THE CRAIG PERSON WITH YOU.

BEFORE LONG, THE TWO CRAFT WERE APPROACHING THE ARGO —

WHAT DOES SPERIS HOPE TO GAIN BY THIS?
ALL HE'S TOLD ME TO DO IS GIVE SINCLAIR THE FREQUENCY ON WHICH THEY CAN TALK!





SCOTT GAVE THE FREQUENCY ON WHICH
TO CONTACT SPERIS —



WHAAA-AAAATT!!!!?



YOU ARE A WALKING BOMB! UNLESS
YOUR COMMANDER DOES EXACTLY
AS I SAY, THE ROBOTS HAVE
ORDERS TO BEAM THE SIGNAL THAT
WILL EXPLODE THE DEVICE!

THAT'S THE SHORT
DISTANCE BEAMER ...

SCOTT GRABBED A HELMET AND RAN —

STOP THE TERRAN!

THE MOLECULAR TRANSPORTER ACTIVATED INSTANTLY AND RE-ASSEMBLED SCOTT IN SPACE.

MADE IT!

BUT SUDDENLY —

DICK — THE IDIOT!
HE'S COMING AFTER ME!



USING EXCESS OXYGEN, SCOTT
MANOEUVRED HIMSELF AWAY —

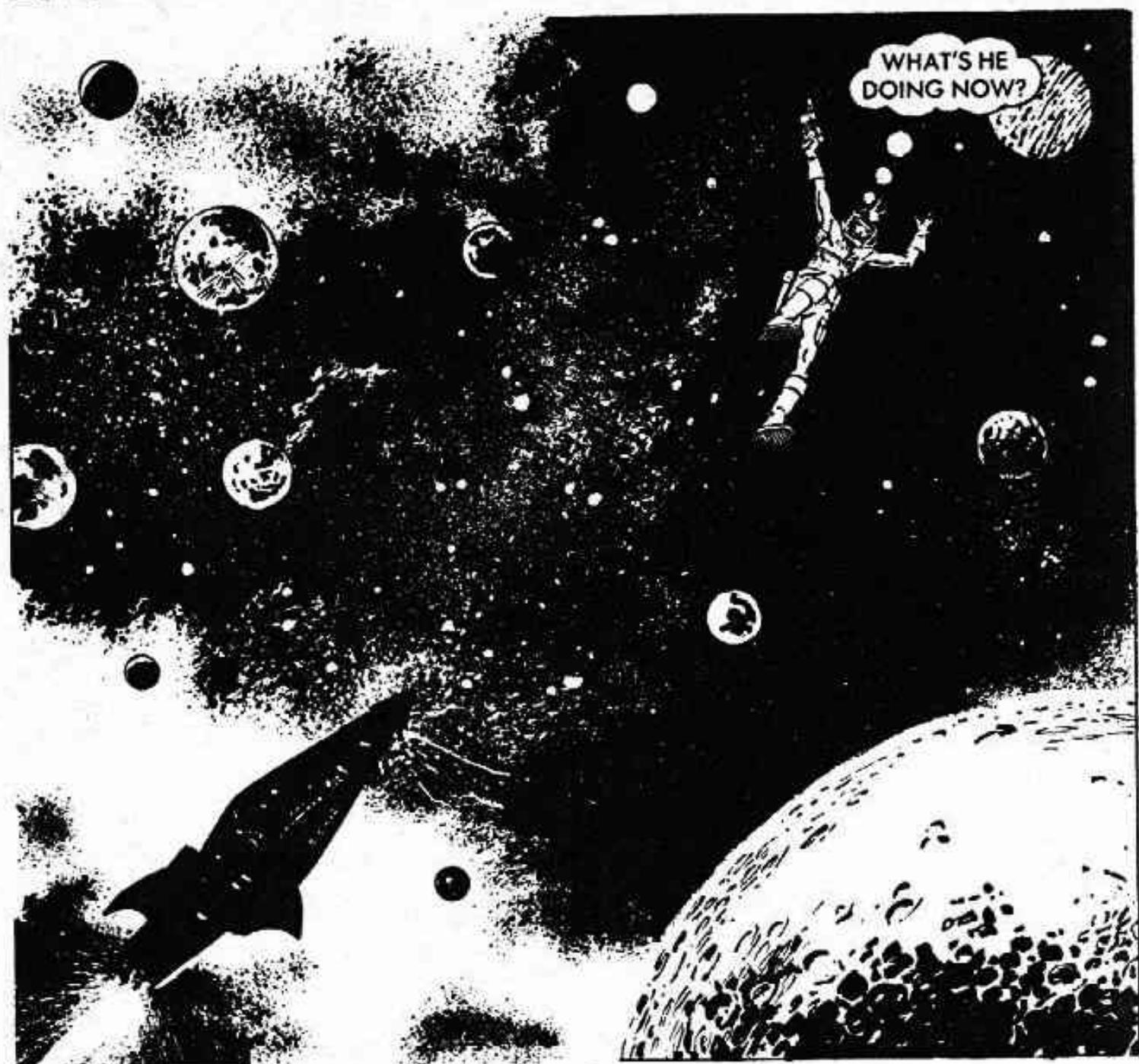
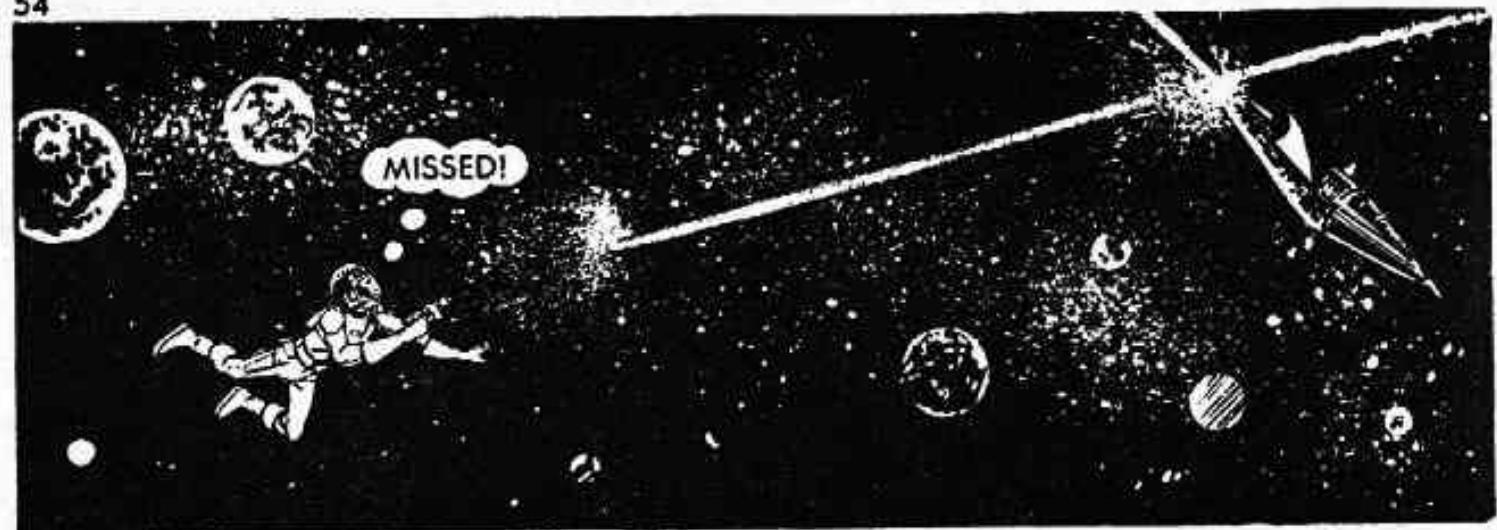
THE ROBOTS MUST HAVE FORCED
HIM! HE'S GOING TO TRY AND TAKE
ME BACK TO THE ARGO TO EXPLODE
THE BOMB!

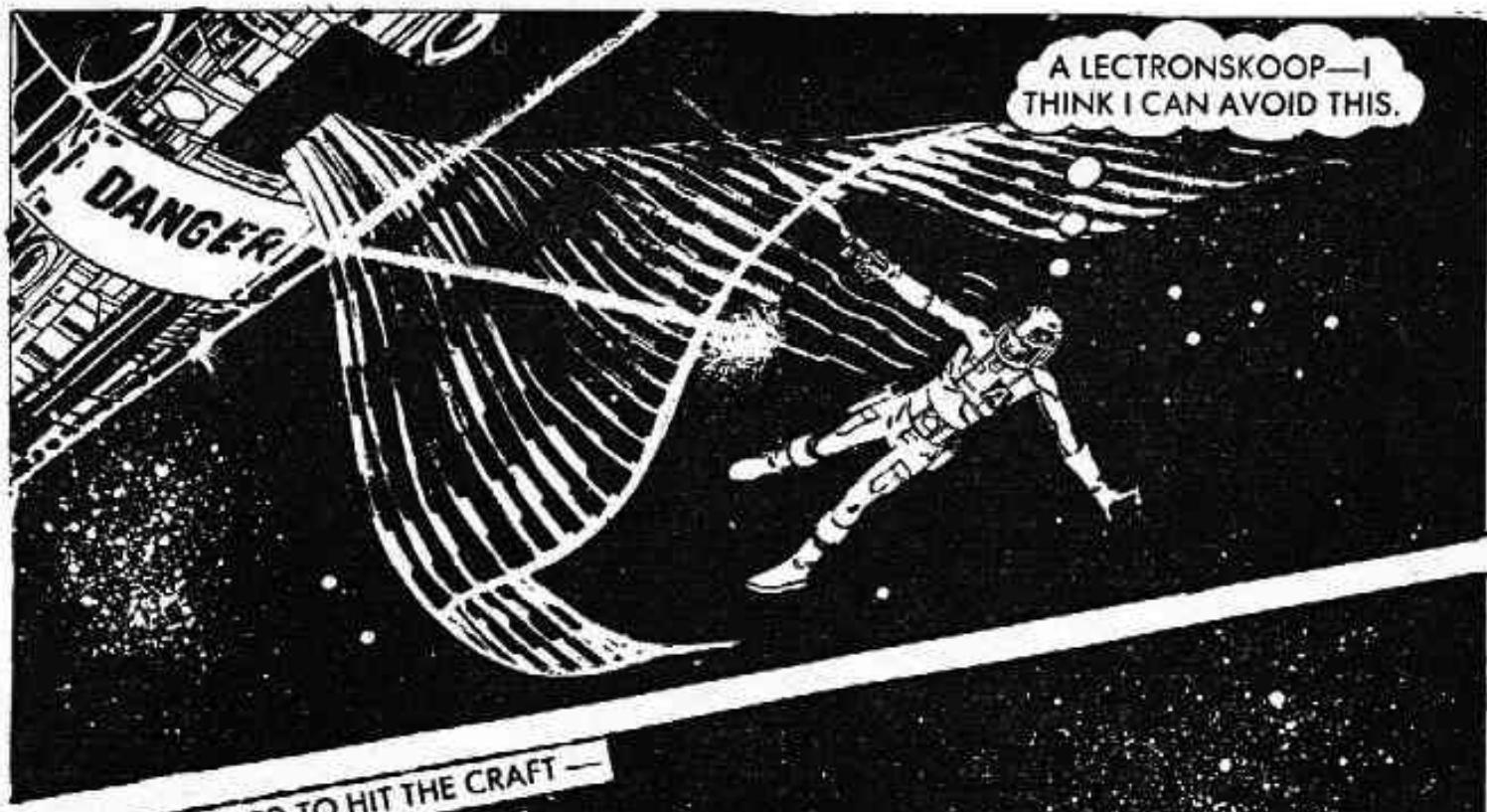


I'M NOT GOING BACK!

SCOTT SQUEEZED OFF A BLAST FROM HIS PHASER, BUT IN FREE SPACE HE WASN'T A STABLE FIRING PLATFORM.

YOU'RE NOT TAKING ME BACK ABOARD TO BLOW UP MY OWN SHIP!







THE TWO BEGAN A STRUGGLE IN SPACE —



SORRY, SCOTT — BUT LACK OF AIR
WILL DO THE JOB.

DICK JETTED SLOWLY BACK TO THE ARGO.



NOT LONG AFTERWARDS —

SCOTT HAS BEEN RECAPTURED,
UNFORTUNATELY! IT SEEMS WE MUST
AGREE TO YOUR DEMANDS. WE WILL
COME ACROSS NOW TO NEGOTIATE
OUR SURRENDER.

I LOOK FORWARD TO
IT WITH PLEASURE!

ONE OF ARGO'S SHUTTLES TOOK THEM ACROSS —

BOW TO THE RULER OF EBRO,
AND ULTIMATELY THE UNIVERSE!

I WILL BOW TO NO MAN —
ESPECIALLY A BRUTE SUCH AS YOU.

YOU DARE SPEAK TO ME LIKE THAT!! MAKE HIM BOW.

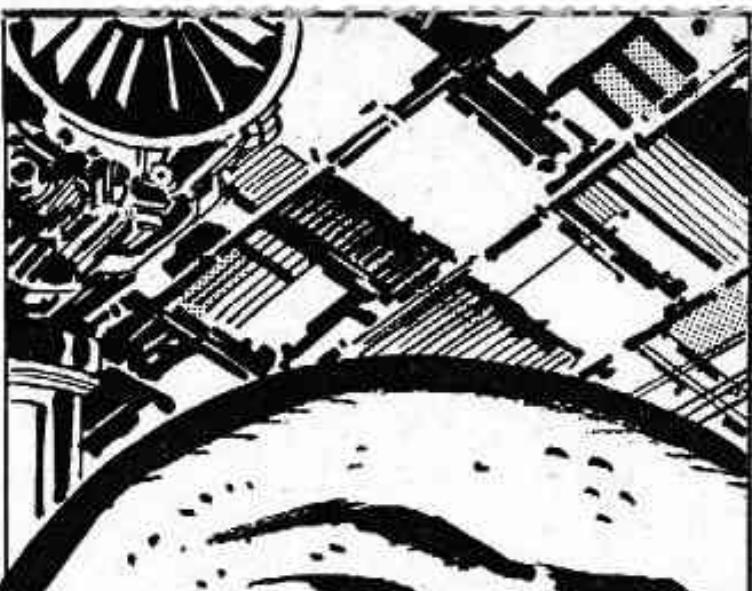


NOT A SINGLE ROBOT MOVED —

WH-WHAT'S HAPPENING? YOU HAVE MADE THEM
MALFUNCTION. I SHALL DESTROY YOUR SHIP.



BUT AS SPERIS REACHED FOR THE
ACTIVATOR — X





DEAL WITH THEM! DEAL
WITH THEM, I SAY!!

I'LL FOLLOW YOU EVERYWHERE. YOU'LL
NEVER KNOW HOW CLOSE I AM SO YOU
WON'T KNOW WHETHER OR NOT TO RISK
DETONATING ME.

FROM A WEAPONS POUCH, SPERIS PRODUCED A LASER SWORD

I SHALL KILL YOU!



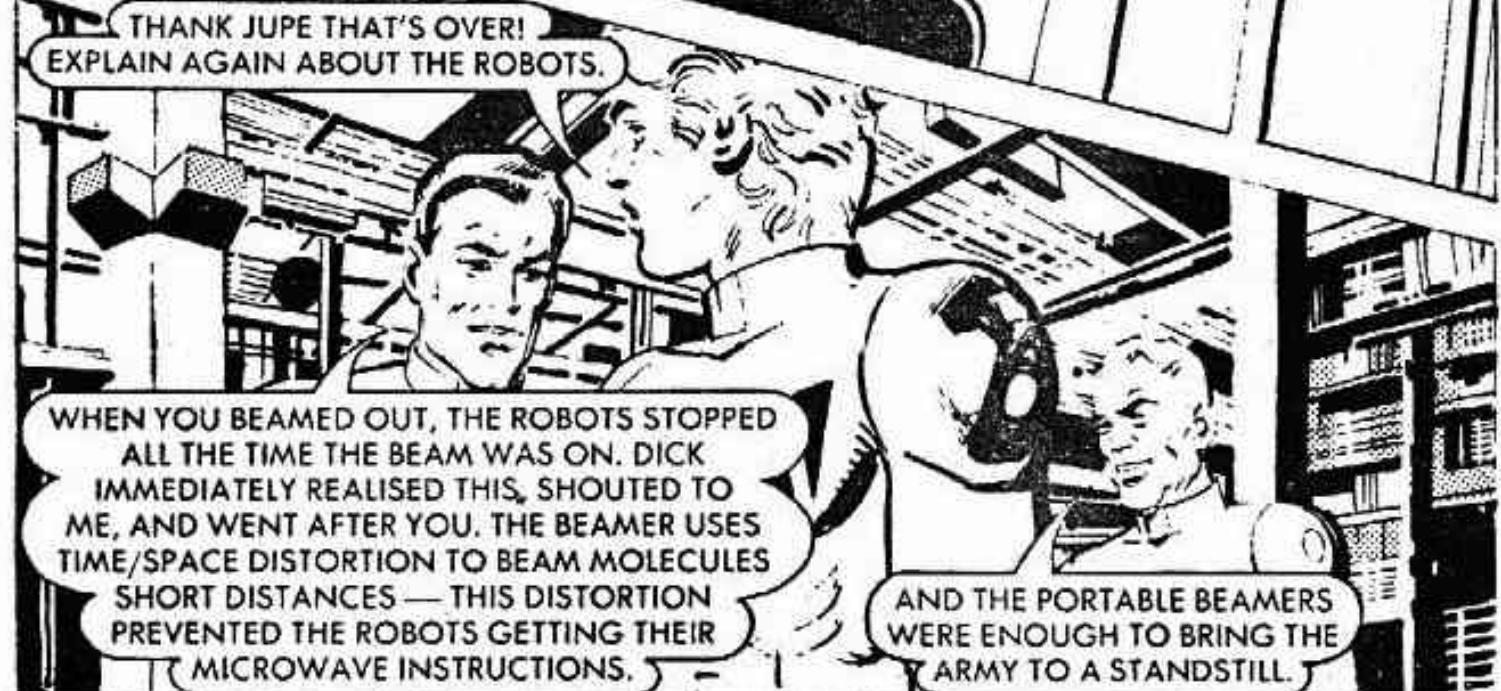


BUT SCOTT FOOLED SPERIS WITH A QUICK HAND CHANGE.





THANK JUPE THAT'S OVER!
EXPLAIN AGAIN ABOUT THE ROBOTS.



WHEN YOU BEAMED OUT, THE ROBOTS STOPPED
ALL THE TIME THE BEAM WAS ON. DICK
IMMEDIATELY REALISED THIS, SHOUTED TO
ME, AND WENT AFTER YOU. THE BEAMER USES
TIME/SPACE DISTORTION TO BEAM MOLECULES
SHORT DISTANCES — THIS DISTORTION
PREVENTED THE ROBOTS GETTING THEIR
MICROWAVE INSTRUCTIONS.

AND THE PORTABLE BEAMERS
WERE ENOUGH TO BRING THE
ARMY TO A STANDSTILL.



SCOTT RELEASED THE IMPRISONED KLIS AND THE TWO STARSHIPS PREPARED TO RETURN TO KLIS, WHERE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD START FOR IT TO BECOME PART OF THE SPACE FEDERATION. EARTH HAD FOUND NOT ONLY ITS LONG-LOST PATROL, BUT A NEW AND VALUABLE ALLY.

el dubya / iodine priest

DON'T FORGET THIS MONTH'S OTHER



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ON
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GUIDE TO THE SPACEMEN



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Soyuz 11 was crewed by three cosmonauts, commander Lieutenant Colonel Georgi Dobravolsky, below, Viktor Patsayev and Vladislav Volkov who had already been in space. Their mission, launched on June 6, 1971 ended in a tragedy. After a record-breaking 23 days, 18 hr., 22 min. their craft suffered a pressurisation failure on re-entry and all three died.